



# Transit Future Plan

CENTRAL OKANAGAN REGION | August 2011

**Executive Summary**





## Acknowledgements

This plan was made possible by participation from provincial and local governments, key stakeholders and the public. BC Transit would like to thank staff from:

The City of Kelowna  
The District of Lake Country  
The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
The District of Peachland  
The Regional District of the Central Okanagan  
The District of West Kelowna  
Westbank First Nation

BC Transit would also like to thank key stakeholders who participated in the Stakeholders Advisory Group by attending meetings, and providing written or verbal comment. The Stakeholders Advisory Group members are listed below:

Casa Loma Community Association	Peachland Residents Association
Clifton Rd/Magic Estates Residents Association	Quails Gate Estate Winery
Downtown Kelowna Association	Rutland Residents Association
Glenmore Valley Residents Association	School District #23
Highway 97 Bypass Task Force	Seniors Outreach Services Society
Holiday Park Resort	Shannon Lake Residents Association
Interior Health Authority	Smith Creek Residents Association
Kelowna Access Awareness Committee	Southwest Mission Residents Association
Kelowna Area Cycling Coalition	Special Needs Advisory Committee
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce	Sunnyside Residents Association
Lake Country Chamber of Commerce	The Lakes Neighbourhood Association
Lake Country Mobility and Access Committee	University of British Columbia Okanagan
Lakeview Heights Community Association	Uptown Rutland Business Association
McKinley Landing	Vernon Chamber of Commerce
North End Residents Association	West Kelowna Residents Association
Okanagan College	Westbank Chamber of Commerce
Peachland Chamber of Commerce	Westside Residents Association

Finally, thank you to the nearly 2,000 members of the public, riders and non-riders alike, who contributed to the plan's development by attending open houses, taking surveys, or submitting written or verbal comment.

# Executive Summary

Transit has tremendous potential to contribute to stronger, more sustainable communities. The need to realize this potential in the Central Okanagan is increasingly important because of factors such as climate change, population growth, increasing traffic congestion, and an aging demographic. For example, today, there are over 120,000 registered vehicles in the region, and 90 per cent of residents commute to work by car. With the population increasing from 188,000 today to approximately 264,000 in 2035, the number of automobile trips will increase in a constrained road network. Transit Oriented Development supported by a strong multi-modal network and Transit Demand Management measures will reduce the rate at which congestion grows.

Meeting the demands of the forecasted population and traffic growth in the Central Okanagan requires a shift in focus from moving vehicles to moving people. In the past, government at all levels has attempted to build its way out of traffic congestion by expanding the road network, but this has only provided temporary relief. Major investments in expanding the road network to accommodate the private automobile do not align with local, regional and provincial planning aspirations. Without a significant increase in the use of transit and other sustainable modes (e.g., walking and cycling) the increase in daily trips will result in increased congestion on key local and regional transportation corridors. Congestion has negative environmental, social and economic impacts on the community and contributes to higher transit costs. To help build a sustainable future in the region, this plan has been designed to achieve a mode share target of seven per cent by 2035, which means an increase from 4.3 million rides today, to nearly 16 million rides in 2035.

The Transit Future Plan envisions the Central Okanagan's transit network 25 years from now and describes what services, infrastructure and investments are needed to get there. In order to achieve the seven per cent mode share target, the plan creates a stronger link between transit plans and local land use and transportation plans. It also supports the *Provincial Transit Plan* and key initiatives of *BC Transit's Strategic Plan*.

“This plan has been designed to achieve a mode share target of seven per cent by 2035, which means an increase from 4.3 million rides today, to nearly 16 million rides in 2035.”

The Transit Future Plan includes a review of the existing transit services, local land use plans, travel data, demographic projections and travel demand forecasts. Consultation efforts included detailed discussions with municipal partners, stakeholders, numerous public open houses, the Transit Future bus tour, a project web site and an online planning game. In total, BC Transit engaged nearly 2,000 people in the region.

The background research and community engagement resulted in the creation of a unified vision for transit and the development of a transit network designed to meet the needs of the Central Okanagan for years to come.

## Vision

*“Transit influences urban form by providing a high-quality, affordable service that puts the customer first.”*

## Goals

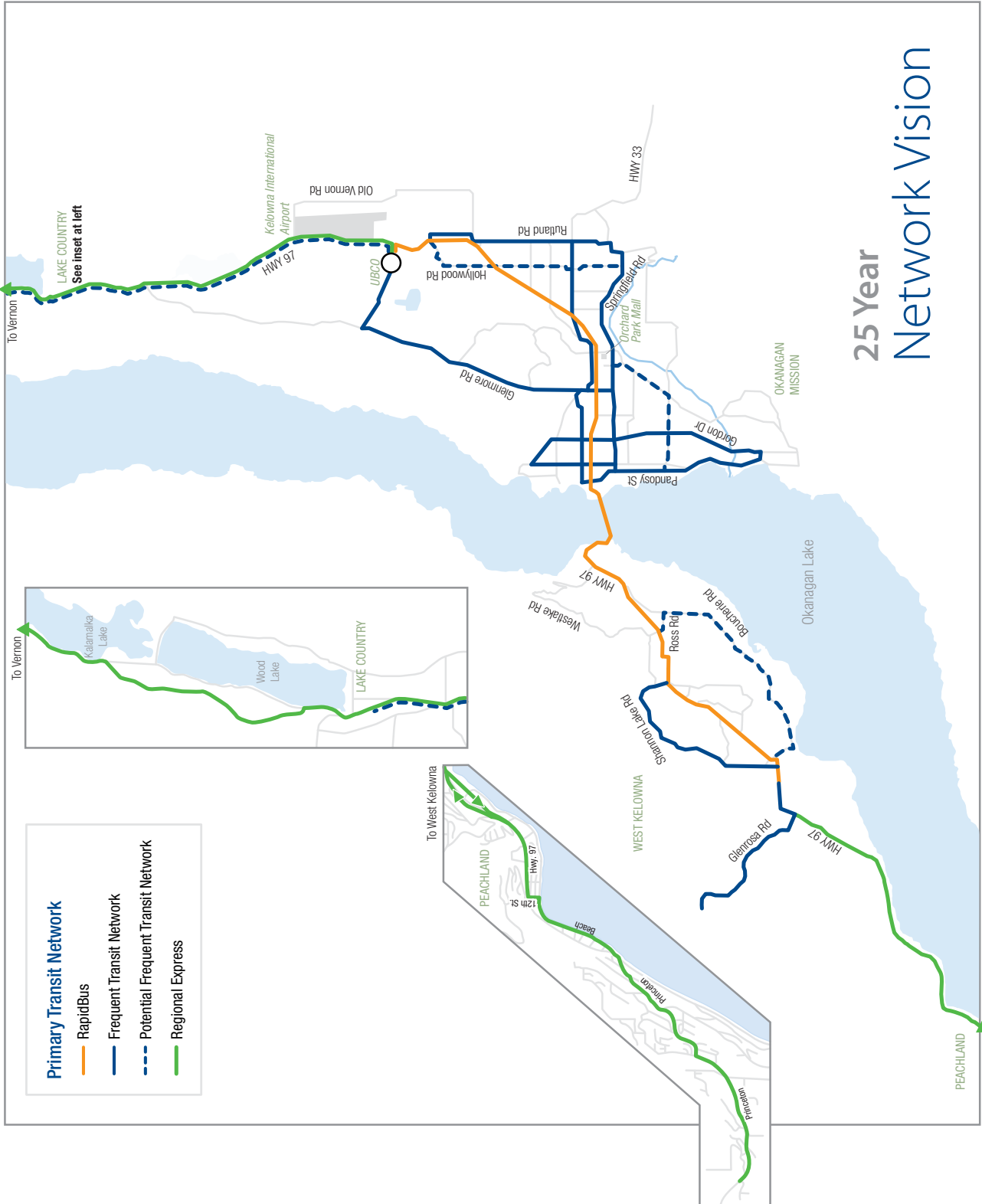
1. Attract New Riders
2. Deliver Operational Excellence
3. Improve Transit Sustainability
4. Improve Custom Transit Utilization

## The Transit Future Network

The 25-year network vision is designed to achieve the Vision and Goals of this plan. More specifically, the following planning principles, developed through the public consultation process, were used to guide the development of the network:

- Direct connections between regional and local major destinations
- Transit priority will be in place on Frequent and Rapid Transit corridors to reduce travel time
- Transit service is convenient, comfortable and easy to understand
- Transit service is modern and attractive





The Transit Future network is composed of four layers of service that are designed to efficiently and effectively move people and are facilitated by transit priority measures.

## Primary Network

### Rapid Transit Network (RTN)

RTN service is designed to move high volumes of passengers between major regional destinations along key transportation corridors. The level of investment in RTN infrastructure, technology, vehicles and service levels combine to significantly increase system performance. RTN services utilize an exclusive or semi-exclusive right-of-way with limited stop service.

### Frequent Transit Network (FTN)

The FTN provides key corridors with a convenient, reliable and frequent transit service. The FTN will carry a large share of the transit system's total ridership and for this reason justifies capital investments in transit priority, a high level of transit stop amenities and corridor branding.

## Secondary Network

### Local Transit Network (LTN)

The LTN is designed to connect neighborhoods to local destinations and to the RTN and FTN.

### Targeted Services

Targeted Services are a collection of transit services which include handyDART, regional, express and rural transit services.

## Implementation Strategy

Establishing the Transit Future network requires prioritizing transit investments into an implementation strategy to transform today's network into the future network. Listed below are the initial priorities first for the system as a whole, and then for each community.

### Network Priorities

- Establish or upgrade key transit infrastructure
  - Operations and Maintenance facility
  - RapidBus stations and exchanges
  - Rutland and Orchard Park exchanges
  - Strategically located Park & Rides
- Establish the Highway 97 RapidBus line from UBCO to Westbank Centre
- Establish the Frequent Transit Network (FTN)
- Initiate aggressive rideshare (carpooling) marketing effort
- Increase custom transit availability and hours of operation

### Kelowna Priorities

- Establish the north-south FTN corridors along Pandosy/Lakeshore and Gordon Dr
- Provide direct service to the H2O recreation centre and the Capital News Centre
- Provide direct east-west service to Kelowna General Hospital and establish the Springfield FTN corridor
- Increase service between Glenmore and UBCO
- Streamline Glenmore service

### West Kelowna Priorities

- Extend the Hwy 97 Express to Westbank Centre from UBCO
- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local transit routes
- Introduce RapidBus after constructing all associated transit capital infrastructure
- Maintain coverage to transit supportive neighbourhoods and provide alternative methods to access the transit system (e.g., Park & Rides)

### Westbank First Nation Priorities

- Extend the Hwy 97 Express to Westbank Centre from UBCO
- Extend evening service on Route 20 – Lakeview
- Introduce RapidBus after constructing all associated transit capital infrastructure
- Maintain coverage to transit supportive neighbourhoods and provide alternative methods to access the transit system (e.g., Park & Rides)

### Lake Country Priorities

- Increase service between Lake Country and Kelowna
- Introduce a Park & Ride in Lake Country's Town Centre and explore shared use opportunities
- Reconfigure how Oyama accesses regional transit service in conjunction with the Highway 97 realignment
- Increase service between Vernon, Lake Country and Kelowna
- Introduce new service to The Lakes neighbourhood

### Peachland Priorities

- Adjust the schedule on Route 22 Peachland to better serve commuters
- Introduce a Park & Ride in the community and explore shared use opportunities
- Begin handyDART service
- Initiate a feasibility study to explore Dial-A-Ride service

### Ongoing Regional Initiatives

- Address existing operational service needs
- Match vehicle type to local demand
- Improve customer information
- Improve transit facilities
- Make transit more accessible





## Moving Forward

### Funding the Plan

Full implementation of the Transit Future Plan will require significant capital and operating investment in the transit system over the next 25 years. To reach the mode share goal of seven per cent, the following goals and investments must be obtained:

- Quadrupling of transit ridership from 4 million to 16 million
- A three-fold increase in annual transit operating hours (from 177,000 to 600,000), requiring 17,000 annual growth hours to reach the 25 year targets
- Expansion of the conventional transit fleet from 72 to 184 buses and the custom fleet from 23 to 51 vehicles
- Investments in transit priority measures to decrease travel time, increase demand and create an increasing return on service hour and fleet investments.

The ambition of this plan and the *Provincial Transit Plan* requires local and provincial partners to continue their endeavors to achieve stable and predictable revenue sources. For this reason, BC Transit will establish a task force to investigate alternative funding and transit incentive options in an attempt to reduce the dependence on increasing local property, provincial and federal taxes to fund transit projects.

### Achieving Success

BC Transit has begun to take steps to guide the Transit Future Plan from vision to reality. A key step is the need for ongoing dialogue with local partners and the Province on transportation policy, funding and the linkage between land use and transit planning.

Moving forward, BC Transit will use this plan to communicate the vision and direction for transit in this region and to encourage integration into local and regional plans and projects.

The Transit Future Plan is designed to accommodate the ridership necessary to achieve the *Provincial Transit Plan* and municipal mode share targets; however, municipal, regional and provincial planning agencies are pivotal in the creation of demand through strategic Transit Oriented Development, transit friendly land use practices, Travel Demand Management and the provision of transit priority measures. These agencies also ensure the necessary active transportation infrastructure is in place to facilitate the shift in modeshare to more sustainable modes.









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